

Chapter 04 - Career Development and Promotion

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PART 1 - Career Development

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Part 1 - Career Development

04101 POLICY

- A. Career development involves a wide range of programs including on-the-job training, part-time training, full-time university training, voluntary independent research, continuing education courses, recreation, and civic activities. Career development helps promote job satisfaction, ensures responsive service, and enhances promotion potential. NCD 04303 discusses professional qualifications.
- B. NOAA Offices fund full-time and part-time university training as required. The Director will attempt to support officer assignment requests for training or research if the activity:
 - (1) meets NOAA's current and future program needs;
 - (2) builds and retains a force of skilled NOAA Corps officers;
 - (3) improves performance in the current assignment, and/or develops qualifications for future assignments; and
 - (4) can be accomplished within budget, personnel, and time constraints.
- C. The career development process is a mutual effort between individual NOAA Corps officers and NOAA. Assignment and training preferences should be indicated on the annual Service Report (NOAA Form 56-25).

04102 FULL-TIME UNIVERSITY TRAINING

(Temporarily suspended)

04103 PART-TIME UNIVERSITY TRAINING

- A. Part-time university training (PUT) may be supported by NOAA, the Commissioned Personnel Center's (CPC) Career Development Division (CDD), or a combination of both, on a case-by-case basis. Supervisors should encourage motivated officers to apply

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for PUT. PUT costs are intended to be shared three ways: the NOAA Corps officer, the NOAA Office, and CPC. In cases where the NOAA Office does not participate, CPC may fund up to 50 percent of the costs. Given the disparity in tuition costs between institutions, however, CPC will cap yearly and overall contributions to an officer's university training. This cap will be at the discretion of the Director, CPC.

- B. NOAA Corps officers may request PUT after gaining acceptance into an accredited institution of higher learning and completing one or more graduate-level courses with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Graduate-level courses completed prior to an officer's commissioning into the NOAA Corps do not count.
- C. PUT request procedures:
 - (1) The NOAA Corps officers must submit a memorandum of request to the Director, CPC, outlining the relationship of course work to NOAA activities. The memorandum must contain the following information:
 - (a) Degree title and name of institution (attach proof of accreditation)
 - (b) Total number of credits/course required for completion
 - (c) Number of courses completed and grades earned (attach a copy of grade report)
 - (d) Estimate total cost of tuition and books
 - (e) Estimate time of completion
 - (f) Statement regarding the effects, if any, on current assignment and future assignment
 - (2) CPC will review the request to determine program need, confirm proper background and motivation, and counsel applicants regarding program suitability.
 - (a) NOAA Corps officers who have requested retirement or tendered resignations, or who have twice failed to be selected for promotion will not be supported in their PUT requests.
 - (b) It is the NOAA Corps officer's responsibility to make the necessary scheduling arrangements, which must be acceptable to the NOAA Corps officer's supervisor.

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- (c) NOAA Corps officers should schedule the completion of training so as not to interrupt the normal NOAA Corps reassignment process.
- D. A PUT board will convene prior to the commencement of each semester to evaluate requests. The board is composed of the Director, CPC (PUT Chair); the Chief, CDD; the Chair, Officer Personnel Board (OPB); the Chair, Officer Assignment Board (OAB); and the Chair, Aviation Advisory Board (AAB). The Assignment Coordinator shall serve on the PUT Board in a non-voting, advisory capacity as secretary. The PUT board will make recommendations authorizing PUT and recommendations to continue or terminate an officer already in PUT to the Director.
- E. Upon notification of acceptance into the program, the NOAA Corps officer will contact the training coordinator at CPC to establish a payment schedule. It is the officer's responsibility to keep CPC informed of all changes to the proposed PUT schedule and forward completion reports (grades) to the training coordinator in a timely manner.

04104 OTHER TRAINING

- A. Correspondence courses and most other short-term training will be approved and funded by the offices to which NOAA Corps officers are assigned. Program managers should recommend appropriate training to enhance performance and potential for promotion. Approving officials should evaluate requests based on the value to NOAA.

04105 SERVICE OBLIGATIONS

- A. NOAA Corps officers enrolled in training at government expense must sign the service agreement on the back of Copy 1 of the SF-182, Request, Authorization and Certification of Training (section G).

04106 VOLUNTARY INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

- A. To utilize intellectual resources and to promote career development, supervisors should support voluntary independent research during duty and non-duty hours. All research must be conducted so as not to interfere with the duties of a NOAA Corps officer, office requirements and program priorities. A research project summary should be included in

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the officer's Official Personnel File (OPF). NOAA Corps officers will publish resultant research papers according to NOAA procedures.

04107 PLANNING AND COUNSELING

- A. Upon the recommendation of the OPB, the Director, CPC, and/or the Chief, CDD, may advise NOAA Corps officers in matters relating to career development. Such advice might include steps for improving performance, training, promotion potential, or assignment choices. In addition, NOAA Corps officers are encouraged to seek career counseling at any time from their immediate supervisors, liaison officers, Director, CPC, or the Chief, CDD.

PART 2 - Promotion

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Part 2 - Promotions**04201 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Promotions may be authorized under the following circumstances.

A. Temporary Promotions

1. When the Secretary designates a position as being a position of importance and responsibility warranting a flag grade, he or she may assign an officer to that position. [33 U.S.C. 3028(a) & (b)]
 - (a) A NOAA Corps officer assigned to a position of importance and responsibility under this section has the grade designated for the position while serving in the position, if appointed to that grade by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. [33 U.S.C. 3028(d)(1)]
The Secretary, if deemed appropriate, shall request that the President appoint the NOAA Corps officer with the advice and consent of the Senate.
 - (b) A NOAA Corps officer who has served in a flag grade shall, upon termination of the assignment for which the flag grade was made, revert to the grade and number the NOAA Corps officer would have occupied but for serving in a flag grade, unless appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate or assigned to another position warranting a flag grade. Upon reversion to his permanent grade, the NOAA Corps officer shall be an extra number in that grade. [33U.S.C. 3028(d)(2)]
 - (c) An assignment made under this subsection does not vacate the permanent grade held by the NOAA Corps officer, and creates a vacancy on the active duty lineal list. [33 U.S.C. 3028(g)]
2. NOAA Corps officers in the permanent grade of ensign may be temporarily promoted to and appointed in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) whenever vacancies exist in higher grades. The authority to make such a temporary promotions rests with the Secretary. [33 U.S.C. 3029(b); Executive Order 11023]
When the Officer Personnel Board (OPB) determines that a temporary promotion under this section is appropriate, the OPB shall recommend to the Director, who will then recommend to the Secretary that such a promotion be effected. Promotion will not be effected until after it is approved by the Secretary.

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3. When determined by the Secretary to be in the best interests of the service, NOAA Corps officers in any permanent grade may be temporarily promoted one grade by the Secretary. [33 U.S.C. 3029(c); Executive Order 11023] When the OPB deems such a promotion to be appropriate, it shall recommend to the Secretary that such a promotion be effected. Promotions will not be effected until after it is approved by the Secretary. NOAA Corps officers will not be temporarily promoted unless they meet the mental and physical examination requirements for permanent promotions (see NCD 04301 and 04302). While temporarily promoted, NOAA Corps officers must maintain the mental and physical qualifications as described in NCD Chapter 3, Part 1. Failure to maintain these mental and physical qualifications will result in a reversion to the NOAA Corps officer's permanent grade and, based on the needs of the program, possible removal from the assignment to which the NOAA Corps officer was temporarily promoted. Any temporary promotion effected under this section shall terminate upon the transfer of the NOAA Corps officer to a new assignment.

B. Permanent Promotions

1. Promotions to all permanent grades shall be made by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. [33 U.S.C. 3026] Permanent promotions shall not be effected until Senate confirmation for the promotion is obtained. Permanent promotions may not be effected until the Secretary receives from the President or from the President's representative information showing that the Senate has confirmed the nominee of the President for appointment as a NOAA Corps officer. [Executive Order 11023, May 28, 1962] The Secretary, in the name of the President, shall issue to each nominee confirmed a commission evidencing the appointment of such person. [Executive Order 11023, May 28, 1962] Permanent promotions shall be made by selection from officers holding permanent appointments in the next lower grade.
2. Any NOAA Corps officer in the permanent grade of ensign shall be promoted to and appointed in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) upon completion of three years of service. If necessary, the authorized number of NOAA Corps officers in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) shall be temporarily increased. [33 U.S.C. 3023(a)]
3. Promotion to fill vacancies in each permanent grade above the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) shall be made by selection from the next lower grade upon recommendation of the OPB. [33 U.S.C. 3024]

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4. Procedure
 - (a) The OPB shall make recommendation(s) to the Secretary and President for the permanent promotion of NOAA Corps officers consistent with NCD 04205. The OPB shall forward its recommendation(s) to the Director. The Director shall forward the OPB's recommendation(s), along with any comments(s) the Director has, to the Secretary.
 - (b) The Secretary shall review the OPB's recommendation(s). The Secretary may concur with the recommendation(s) of the OPB in whole or in part. If the Secretary concurs with the recommendation(s), the recommendation(s) will be forwarded to the President. If the Secretary does not accept the recommendation(s) of the OPB, the OPB shall make further recommendation(s) as are acceptable. [33 U.S.C. 3022(c)]
5. NOAA Corps officers will not be promoted to a higher permanent grade on the lineal list until a satisfactory mental and physical examination is passed in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary (see NCD 04301 and 04302). [33 U.S.C. 3027] NOAA Corps officers will not be promoted until the prescribed professional qualifications have been satisfied (See NCD 04303).

04202 LINEAL LIST OF COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

- A. The Director shall maintain a lineal list of all NOAA Corps officers on active duty in the NOAA Corps. [33 U.S.C. 3003(b)] NOAA Corps officers holding appointments to flag grade under paragraph NCD 04201A are not considered to be on the lineal list for purposes of counting against NOAA Corps authorized strength. [33 U.S.C. 3028(g)(2)]
- B. NOAA Corps officers shall be carried on the lineal list in the order of seniority of the grade in which they are serving on active duty. NOAA Corps officers serving in the same grade shall be carried in the order of their date of rank in that grade unless the OPB has recommended and the Director has approved an adjustment in the lineal list.
- C. NOAA Corps officers shall have, for promotion purposes, at least the same length of service as any NOAA Corps officer below him/her on the lineal list. [33 U.S.C. 3025(a)] NOAA Corps officers who have been reduced in rank shall be assumed to have no greater service than the officer next above them in their new position on the lineal list. [33 U.S.C.3025(b)]

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- D. A NOAA Corps officer whose position on the lineal list results from service under a temporary promotion has, when that promotion ends, the grade and position in the lineal list that he/she would have held if that promotion had not been made.

04203 ELIGIBILITY FOR PROMOTION CONSIDERATION

- A. The length of service-in-grade requirements indicated below are minimum thresholds that must be met for promotion. This minimum service-in-grade does not necessarily denote the years of commissioned service at which all officers are promoted to a particular grade.
- (1) Promotion to the permanent grade of:
 - (a) Captain - four years in the permanent grade of commander;
 - (b) Commander - four years in the permanent grade of lieutenant commander;
 - (c) Lieutenant Commander - three years in the permanent grade of lieutenant; and
 - (d) Lieutenant - two years in the permanent grade of lieutenant (junior grade).
 - (2) NOAA Corps officers on the lineal list holding the permanent grade of ensign may be promoted to the temporary grade of lieutenant (junior grade) upon completion of a minimum of 12 months of service in the permanent grade of ensign, provided that a vacancy exists in the higher grade. [33 U.S.C. 3029(b)]
 - (3) NOAA Corps officers in the permanent grade of ensign shall be promoted to and appointed in the permanent grade of lieutenant (junior grade) upon completion of three years of service, and the authorized number of officers in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) shall be temporarily increased as necessary to authorize such appointments. [33 U.S.C. 3023(a)] Ensigns found not fully qualified at any time shall have their commissions revoked and be separated from the NOAA Corps. [33 U.S.C. 3023(b)]
- B. When the needs of the NOAA Corps require, the Director may adjust length of service-in-grade requirements, to the extent that service-in-grade requirements are not otherwise fixed by statute.

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- C. In computing service-in-grade for the purpose of promotion, except as provided in NCD 04203D, service in a grade held as a result of a temporary appointment is counted as service in the permanent grade which the NOAA Corps officer holds.
- D. In computing service-in-grade for the purpose of promotion to the permanent grade of lieutenant, service in the temporary grade of lieutenant (junior grade) held under the provisions of NCD 04203A(2), is counted as service in the permanent grade of lieutenant (junior grade).
- E. NOAA Corps officers above the rank of ensign having once failed to be selected for promotion remain eligible for consideration for promotion to the next higher grade and shall be included in the next promotion zone established for selection to that higher grade.
- F. NOAA Corps officers once found not qualified for promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) may be separated from the NOAA Corps in accordance with NCD 08301A.
- G. NOAA Corps officers having:
 - (1) twice failed to be selected for promotion to the next higher grade; or
 - (2) been selected for promotion to the next higher grade and decline such promotion; or
 - (3) tendered their resignation;shall remain eligible for consideration for promotion until their active duty service is ended in accordance with applicable provisions of these regulations or some other provision of law. Such NOAA Corps officers shall be deemed as being above the zone, and although considered for promotion, shall not be included in subsequent promotion zones.
- H. A NOAA Corps officer whose voluntary retirement has been approved will not be eligible for consideration for promotion to the next higher grade and will not be included in the promotion zone.
- I. When authorized by the Director, NOAA Corps officers junior in rank to those NOAA Corps officers in an established promotion zone may be considered for promotion. In such cases, the Director shall specify the number of NOAA Corps officers below the zone that may be considered for deep selection. This number shall not exceed 20 percent of the number of NOAA Corps officers in the established promotion zone. NOAA

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Corps officers considered for deep selection shall be those most senior in grade but not in the established promotion zone. NOAA Corps officers below the zone, considered for, but not selected for promotion, are not considered to have failed to be selected for promotion.

- J. No officer shall be considered for permanent promotion until the officer has served in the NOAA Corps for at least 12 months. Officers appointed in the NOAA Corps via the Inter-service transfer process or former NOAA Corps officers receiving a new original appointment and who are initially or subsequently placed in a promotion zone, but have not served in the NOAA Corps for at least 12 months under the new appointment, will not be considered for promotion but will not be considered to have failed selection for promotion.

04204 PROMOTION ZONES

- A. Not less than once a year, in consultation with the Director, CPC, the Director shall review the needs of the NOAA Corps and establish, within the authorized strength, the number of officers needed in each grade. Based on the number established, and the number of vacancies anticipated, the Director shall estimate the number of promotions to be made in each grade. Insofar as practicable, the number of promotions to captain, commander, and lieutenant commander shall be prescribed annually and the number of promotions to lower grades semiannually. Selection of NOAA Corps officers for promotion shall be scheduled accordingly.
- B. When the number of promotions to be made has been prescribed, the Director shall establish a promotion zone for the grades of lieutenant through captain from which NOAA Corps officers may be selected for promotion.
- C. The number of NOAA Corps officers in a promotion zone (zone size) shall not be less than the number of selections planned, multiplied by the applicable multiplier. In cases where the product is a fraction, the minimum zone size will be the next higher number.

Promotion Multiplier

| | |
|-----|-----------------------|
| O-2 | No multiplier is used |
| O-3 | 1 |
| O-4 | 1.50 |
| O-5 | 1.75 |
| O-6 | 2.00 |

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- D. NOAA Corps officers in each promotion zone shall be those most senior in grade, whether or not fully qualified by time-in-grade or for other reason who are not on an existing promotion list and have not twice failed to be selected for promotion except as prescribed by NCD 04303(4)(b) . Selections for promotion shall be made only once from a given promotion zone.
- E. There is no promotion zone to the grade of lieutenant (junior grade). The OPB will review all NOAA Corps officers in the permanent grade of ensign for retention prior to their having attained three years of service. All those NOAA Corps officers found suitable for retention will be recommended for appointment in the permanent grade of lieutenant (junior grade). For promotion to lieutenant, all NOAA Corps officers considered may be recommended by the OPB for selection for promotion if found to be qualified.

04205 SELECTION FOR PROMOTION

- A. The OPB shall review the records of all NOAA Corps officers eligible for consideration and recommend for promotion to the grade of lieutenant commander or higher those NOAA Corps officers whom the OPB considers best qualified to serve in the next higher grade. For selection for promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) refer to NCD 04203 and 04204E.
- B. The OPB shall include in its report the name and reason(s) of any NOAA Corps officer whose record indicates that he/she should be required to show cause for retention on active duty.
- C. Proceedings of the OPB convened under these Directives may not be disclosed to any person not a member of the OPB, unless disclosure is specifically authorized by the Director or by other provisions of law.

04206 NOMINATION LIST

- A. OPB recommendations for promotions shall be forwarded to the Secretary and to the President if the Secretary accepts the OPB's recommendations. Only those officers found qualified for promotion will be forwarded to the Secretary and the President for promotion appointments with the advice and consent of the Senate.

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- B. When a NOAA Corps officer is found not qualified on the date the nomination list is to be forwarded because of circumstances within the NOAA Corps officer's control or which should have been anticipated and acted on by the NOAA Corps officer, the nomination will be delayed. Absent unusual circumstances, failure to provide documentation and or comply with any section in NCD Chapter 4, Part 3, except NCD 04302C (1-3) and (6-8), will result in a delay of promotion. After the delay period has ended, provided the NOAA Corps officer is fully qualified, the Director shall forward to the Secretary the nomination for promotion.
- C. A nomination will be suspended when a NOAA Corps officer, through no fault of his or her own, is found not qualified on the date the nomination is to be forwarded. Except for failure to comply with NCD 04302 C (4 and 5), the nomination of a NOAA Corps officer found not physically qualified shall be suspended. Upon resolution of the suspension, the Director shall forward the nomination to effect the promotion. During the suspension, promotion of other officers in the grade of the suspended officer shall continue. Depending on the length of the suspension, the OPB may make a recommendation for a lineal list adjustment.

04207 EFFECTING PROMOTION

- A. Upon receipt of notice that a promotion has been confirmed by the Senate from the President, or from the President's representative, the Director shall forward the necessary paperwork to the Secretary, to effect permanent promotions subject to the provisions of these regulations and the availability of vacancies in grades. [Executive Order 11023] The Secretary shall issue to each NOAA Corps officer promoted a commission, in the name of the President, with the effective date specified in the commission to be deemed for all purposes to be the date of the promotion. [Executive Order 11023] Except as noted in NCD 04207B, promotions shall be effected in the order on the nomination lists.
- B. A promotion will be delayed when a NOAA Corps officer is found not qualified when scheduled for promotion because of circumstances within the NOAA Corps officer's control or which should have been anticipated and acted on by the NOAA Corps officer. Absent unusual circumstances, failure to comply with weight, mental and physical fitness standards, or to complete course requirements will result in a delay of promotion. Upon being found fully qualified, the Director shall forward the necessary paperwork to the Secretary to effect the promotion of the NOAA Corps officer when the next vacancy in the higher grade occurs. [Executive Order 11023] The Secretary shall issue to each NOAA Corps officer promoted a commission, in the name of the President, with the effective date specified in the commission to be deemed for all purposes to be the date of the promotion. [Executive Order 11023] Lineal placement lost during the delay period shall not be reinstated upon promotion.

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- C. A promotion will be suspended when an officer through no fault of his/her own is found not qualified on a scheduled promotion date. Except for failure to comply with weight and/or physical fitness standards, or to obtain required medical examinations, the promotion of a NOAA Corps officer found not physically qualified shall be suspended in accordance with NCD 04302. Upon resolution of the cause of the suspension, the Director shall forward the necessary paperwork to the Secretary to effect the promotion. [Executive Order 11023]. The Secretary shall issue to each NOAA Corps officer promoted a commission, in the name of the President, with the effective date specified in the commission to be deemed for all purposes to be the date of the promotion. [Executive Order 11023] During the suspension the promotion of other NOAA Corps officers will continue to occur. Positions within the grade that the suspended officer is to be promoted to will not be held. Depending on the circumstances the OPB may make a recommendation for a lineal list adjustment.
- D. Pending resolution of any charges of, including but not limited to, disciplinary action against any NOAA Corps officer, promotion shall be suspended. If cleared of any wrong doing, the NOAA Corps officer's promotion will be effected when the next vacancy is available. Depending on the circumstances, the OPB may make a recommendation for lineal list adjustment.

04208 ACCEPTANCE OF PROMOTION

- A. Any NOAA Corps officer promoted to a higher grade shall be deemed to have accepted promotion to that grade on the date such promotion is made by the Secretary through the issuance of the commission, unless the NOAA Corps officer declines the promotion, and shall receive the pay and allowances of the higher grade from such date unless entitled under some other provision of law to receive the pay and allowances of the higher grade from an earlier date. [33 U.S.C. 3031(A)] Any NOAA Corps officer who has taken the oath of office shall not be required to renew such oath upon promotion to a higher grade if the NOAA Corps officer's service has been continuous after taking the original oath. [33 U.S.C. 3031(b)] NOAA Corps officers must serve two years in grade, temporary and/or permanent, to be eligible to retire at that grade.

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04209 FAILURE TO BE SELECTED FOR PROMOTION

- A. Failure to be selected for promotion (nonselection) is considered to occur when a NOAA Corps officer is in an established promotion zone and is not selected for promotion.
- B. The name of any NOAA Corps officer delayed from promotion pursuant to NCD 04207B who fails to satisfy course requirements on or before expiration of the time as noted in this section and granted by the Director, CPC shall be removed from the promotion list and be considered to have failed to be selected.
- C. The consequences of two consecutive failures to be selected for promotion are addressed in NCD 04203G; NCD Chapter 8, Part 3; and NCD Chapter 8, Part 4.
- D. If it is determined that an ensign should not receive a promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) at the end of three years of service, the ensign will be separated from the service in accordance with NCD 08301A prior to completion of three years of service.

PART 3 - Qualifications for Promotion

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Part 3 - Qualifications for Promotion**04301 MENTAL QUALIFICATIONS**

- A. Mental qualifications refer to the traits considered of such importance that deficiencies would indicate an inability to adequately perform the duties required of the next higher grade. These traits include mental stability and moral fitness. A NOAA Corps officer is considered to be mentally qualified unless a report, record, examination, or test indicates otherwise. However, any doubt as to the mental stability of a NOAA Corps officer shall be resolved after conferring with appropriate medical personnel. In reaching a determination of moral fitness, the following shall be considered:
- (1) A finding of moral unfitness is usually based on misconduct of a commissioned officer (Refer to NCD Chapter 7). It may be based on a specific act or a series of matters, which when taken together, evidence a pattern sufficiently serious to disqualify the NOAA Corps officer for promotion. Common grounds for findings of moral disqualification include, but are not limited to, habitual drunkenness, financial irresponsibility, gambling, improper use of drugs, insubordination, false official statements, sexual deviancy, or other disgraceful or scandalous conduct.
 - (2) Consideration will also be given as to whether the NOAA Corps officer being considered for promotion has lived up to the provisions of Department of Commerce Administrative Order 202-735A (Employee Responsibilities and Conduct), Standards of Ethical Conduct of the Executive Branch and NOAA Corps Directives.

04302 PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS

- A. NOAA Corps officers physically fit for retention are to be physically fit for promotion. Physical demands on NOAA Corps officers tend to become less severe with increase in grade, therefore the officer must maintain the physical standards of these directives.
- B. NOAA Corps officers will not be nominated or promoted to a higher grade until, as reflected by the most recent physical examination, determined physically qualified for promotion. Additional physical examinations for the purpose of determining physical qualifications for promotion are not required unless specified by the Director.
- C. Subject to any further review of the records that may be indicated and action pursuant thereto, a NOAA Corps officer shall be considered physically qualified, provided the NOAA Corps officer is not:

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- (1) undergoing hospitalization;
 - (2) on sick-in-quarters status or convalescent leave;
 - (3) awaiting final action on the recommended findings of a Medical Review Board;
 - (4) delinquent in obtaining required medical examinations;
 - (5) delinquent in completion or unable to complete successfully the Physical Readiness Testing requirement;
 - (6) not fit for sea duty if currently assigned to sea duty;
 - (7) not fit for shore duty; and
 - (8) not fit for mobile duty.
- D. Promotion of a NOAA Corps officer in any of the situations listed in NCD 04302C, except NCD 04302C (4) and (5), shall be suspended until such time as physical fitness is determined. Promotion of a NOAA Corps officer in the situation in NCD 04304C (4) and (5) shall be delayed. If found not physically qualified, the NOAA Corps officer shall be separated or retired, as applicable, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 61 of Title 10, U.S. Code.

04303 PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Professional qualifications refer to a NOAA Corps officer's cumulative record of performance including, but not limited to, those factors evaluated in fitness reports (See NCD Chapter 4, Part 4). Additional professional qualification requirements for promotion to particular grades are prescribed below:
- (1) Promotion to lieutenant (junior grade)
 - (a) To begin developing supervisory and management competencies, satisfactory completion of a minimum of 3.0 CEU (Continuing Education Unit) of introductory supervision training is required.
 - (b) NOAA Corps officers in the grade of ensign must complete course requirements by their date of nomination, or by 18 months, which ever comes first.

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- (2) Promotion to lieutenant
 - (a) To continue developing supervisory and management competencies, satisfactory completion of a 2.4 CEU of introductory financial management training and 2.4 CEU of personnel management skills training is required.
 - (b) Acquisition or upgrade of a professional license, including Engineer in Training, may be substituted for a required course for promotion to lieutenant. Acquisition or upgrade of a professional license before commissioning is not creditable. The Director, CPC, will determine creditable licenses.
 - (c) NOAA Corps officers in the grade of lieutenant (junior grade) must complete all course requirements by their date of nomination.
 - (d) In addition to the satisfactory completion of all course requirements referred to in NCD 04303A(2)(a), each officer shall, not later than the date considered for promotion, possess a letter of qualification as a NOAA Officer of the Deck (OOD) Underway or a letter of qualification as a NOAA Aviator (Pilot or Navigator) in a particular aircraft type, and have performed duties as a qualified NOAA OOD or NOAA Aviator for a minimum of three (3) months.
 - (e) The Director has final authority on courses that qualify a NOAA Corps officer for promotion to lieutenant.
- (3) When considered justified, a NOAA Corps officer granted positive adjustment on the lineal list may be excused from the requirement for completing courses for promotion to lieutenant (junior grade) and/or lieutenant by the Director, CPC. The Director, CPC, shall notify the NOAA Corps officer of such determination and make such notification a part of the NOAA Corps officer's Officer Personnel File.

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- (4) Promotion to lieutenant commander
 - (a) A NOAA Corps officer must have demonstrated the ability or potential to manage people and resources in order to be professionally qualified for promotion to lieutenant commander. In addition to the courses prescribed in sections NCD 04303A(1) and 04303A(2), and as a complement to on-the-job experience gained through involvement in NOAA programs, satisfactory completion of 15 CEU or equivalent short-course hours of supervisory/management-type training is required.
 - (b) Any NOAA Corps officer in the grade of lieutenant who fails to complete course requirements and who has not been granted an extension by the Director, CPC, by the time the OPB meets to make selection from the promotion zone, shall be omitted from the zone and considered as having failed to be selected for promotion. A NOAA Corps officer below the promotion zone, who has not completed course requirements, will not be considered for deep selection.
- (5) Courses selected by the NOAA Corps officer to fulfill the requirements of NCD 04303A(1), 04303A(2), and 04303A(4) should be from the approved list contained in Appendix B-1, to the maximum extent feasible. Classroom or self-study courses not included in Appendix B-1 shall be approved for promotion purposes by the Director, CPC, upon prior written request, and confirmation of course's acceptability. Funding and scheduling for approved off-site classroom courses should be arranged through the organization to which the NOAA Corps officer is assigned. Funding for approved self-study courses in supervisory/management type training for promotion purposes may be arranged through the Director, CPC.
- (6) For promotion to commander and captain four broad criteria will be evaluated for selection: leadership ability, management ability, professional development, and breadth of experience. These criteria are in addition to and supportive of the predominant criteria of performance as determined through the NOAA Corps officer's fitness reports and documented achievements.
 - (a) Leadership ability is marked by those traits of an individual that inspire people, are essential in leading a program or project successfully, and produce positive results. Generally, these characteristics correlate closely with job performance.

Part 3 - Qualifications for Promotions

- (b) Management ability is gained largely through service in a position of authority over program resources (personnel and/or funding) that develops decision-making skills. Examples of typical billets that satisfy this requirement are:
 - 1. Commanding or Executive Officer - Ship
 - 2. Aircraft Commander
 - 3. Chief - Group, Branch or Division
 - 4. Director - Office, Facility or Laboratory
 - 5. Staff Officer to Senior Manager
 - 6. Program/Project Manager - Major Activity
- (c) Professional development is a continuing process and is manifested through various types of training programs, either part-time or full-time, as well as active participation within a professional discipline. Each NOAA Corps officer must assess further needs for training in areas of weakness and then seek to obtain such training so as to remain professionally and competitively strong within his/her officer peer group.
- (d) Breadth of experience is important for senior NOAA Corps officers expected to work with interdisciplinary matters and across organizational lines. However, NOAA Corps officers should not become so broadly based that they lose professional credibility. Rather, NOAA Corps officers should strive to gain a basic knowledge of NOAA's overall activities, structure and mission and keep informed about significant events affecting NOAA. Some examples of assignments that provide breadth of experience are:
 - 1. Policy/program billets with Line Organizations
 - 2. Offices within NOAA Headquarters
 - 3. Management and Budget Staff
 - 4. International or Interagency Liaison

Part 3 - Qualifications for Promotions

- (e) NOAA Corps officers approaching the promotion zone to captain should make an effort to enroll in a residential executive training programs such as the courses offered at the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Federal Executive Institute and Management Development Centers.
- (7) Criteria for promotion to flag grade are essentially the same as indicated in NCD 04303A(6), in addition to personal and professional attributes applicable to the specific flag billet under consideration.

04304 COMPLETION OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- A. Qualified NOAA Corps officers may be selected for or if selected, promoted to, at any time on or after completing the minimum time-in-grade requirements for promotion. Every NOAA Corps officer shall complete course requirements by the date of eligibility for promotion (date of rank plus minimum time in grade). Ensigns must complete course work as noted in NCD 04303A(1).
- B. It is the responsibility of the NOAA Corps officer to furnish documentation of final course completion to the Director, CPC, in a timely manner.
- C. The nomination of a NOAA Corps officer who has been granted additional time to complete course requirements will be suspended for the additional time allowed. Upon completion of the course requirements within the time allowed, the officer will be nominated for the higher grade. Depending on the length of the suspension the OPB may make a recommendation for a lineal list adjustment.
- D. NOAA Corps officers have ample time to complete course requirements prescribed herein. Requests for additional time will be approved by the Director, CPC, only in the event of extreme circumstances preventing the NOAA Corps officer from completing these requirements. Recent workload, misinterpretation, or ignorance of these directives are not valid reasons for granting additional time.
- E. NOAA Corps officers are exempt from requirements issued subsequent to the date on which they were found to have met the previous course requirements.

PART 4 - Fitness Reports

| Section | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Policy | 04401 |
| Submission of Fitness Reports | 04402 |
| Procedures | 04403 |
| Fitness Report Routing | 04404 |

Part 4 - Fitness Reports**04401 POLICY**

- A. Fitness Reports for commissioned officers (NOAA Form 56-6) are used as the primary indicator of a NOAA Corps officer's overall performance, progress, and development and are a significant factor in selecting NOAA Corps officers for promotion, assignment, and separation. Supervisors must devote proper care and attention to completing fitness reports to ensure fair, impartial, and complete evaluations.

04402 SUBMISSION OF FITNESS REPORTS

- A. Fitness Reports shall be submitted by each officer's immediate supervisor as follows:
- (1) all grades - annually for the period ending December 31;
 - (2) ensigns and lieutenants (junior grade) with less than three years of NOAA Corps service - semiannually for the periods ending June 30 and December 31;
 - (3) when either the officer or his/her immediate supervisor is transferred or otherwise leaves his/her position;
 - (4) when the NOAA Corps officer completes a supervised temporary duty (TDY) assignment of 60 days or more, to be submitted by the TDY supervisor;
 - (5) at any time when the performance of an officer is deemed exceptional;
 - (6) at any time when a supervisor considers a NOAA Corps officer unfit, for poor performance or questions the retention of the NOAA Corps officer because of incompetence, inaptitude, or other performance-related reason; or
 - (7) upon the request of the Director, Commissioned Personnel Center (CPC).
- B. Fitness Reports must be sequential, covering each day of a NOAA Corps officer's career. Fitness Reports covering other than normal periods (June 30 and December 31), such as those covered by NCD 04402A(3) or (4) above, will end on the day of detachment. The next reporting period will begin on the day after detachment, covering travel, proceed, and leave time taken.

Part 4 - Fitness Reports

Supervisors completing Fitness Reports covered by NCD 04402A (6), or (7) above shall make their next Fitness Report for the period beginning the day following said Fitness Report.

- C. When a NOAA Corps officer will be detached within 60 days before or after the date an annual or semiannual Fitness Report is due, only the detachment Fitness Report is required.
- D. Supervisors of NOAA Corps officers on TDY for less than 60 days are encouraged to document performance via memorandum to full-time supervisors, with copy, to the Commissioned Personnel Center for inclusion in the NOAA Corps officers Official Personnel File.
- E. Fitness Reports for periods of less than 60 days at the start of, or during (in the event of transfer of the rating officer) a NOAA Corps officer's assignment, shall not be prepared. In such cases, Fitness Report, blocks 1 through 7 shall be completed, and block 11 shall contain the statement "Inadequate time to report". Comprehensive Fitness Reports are required for such periods occurring at the end of a NOAA Corps officer's tour of duty.
- F. Each supervisor rating a NOAA Corps officer shall complete the sentence in block 11 regarding progress and retention in the NOAA Corps. Commentary in block 10 and 11 shall support this statement. Reports containing negative recommendations shall be submitted as prescribed NCD 04403D.
- G. The rating officer shall include a statement in the Fitness Report regarding the type and extent of training completed by the NOAA Corps officer during the rating period.
 - (1) The rating officer of a lieutenant shall include a statement in the report regarding the leadership and management ability or potential of the NOAA Corps officer.
- H. A supervisor who fails to prepare and submit a NOAA Corps officer's Fitness Report within 60 days of a deadline shall forward to the Director, CPC, a statement explaining the reasons for the delay.

Part 4 - Fitness Reports**04403 PROCEDURES**

- A. Fitness Reports must be prepared within 30 days of the end of the reporting period. The primary purpose of the report is to inform the NOAA Corps officer of their strengths and weaknesses and, if applicable, to specify how performance can be improved. Narratives should be factual and to the point. Commentary should fit in the space provided on the Fitness Report form.
- (1) The Fitness Report shall be signed in the rating officer block 15 by the supervisor who actually evaluates the NOAA Corps officer's performance. It shall then be forwarded to the next supervisory level for signature in the reporting officer block. The names of the rating officer and the reporting officer must be typed or legibly printed below the signatures.
 - (2) The reporting officer shall review the Fitness Report and may add comments. If in disagreement, the reporting officer shall indicate their opinion on the report or an attached letter. The reporting officer's signature indicates concurrence unless otherwise stated.
 - (3) An individual may not sign as both rating officer and reporting officer. The rating officer is the officer's immediate supervisor; the reporting officer is the rating officer's immediate supervisor.
 - (4) Attachment pages are discouraged, but if necessary, shall be signed and dated by the rated, rating, and reporting officers.
 - (5) Fitness reports will not become part of the NOAA Corps officer Official Personnel File (OPF) until all of the signatures in block 15 of the Fitness Report are completed as required in sections 1, 2, and 3 above.
- B. After signature by both rating and reporting officer, the Fitness Report shall be presented to and discussed with the rated officer, who shall indicate that he/she has read it by signing block 15. The signature of the rated officer indicates the Fitness Report has been read and does not indicate agreement by the rated officer. If in extraordinary circumstances the rated officer is not readily available due to detachment or detached duty, the rating officer shall provide the rated officer with a copy of the Fitness Report, explain the circumstances in block 11, and transmit the original to the Director, CPC.
- C. If a NOAA Corps officer believes that he/she has been unjustly rated, the officer is entitled to forward, within 10 days of signing the Fitness Report, a rebuttal to the Director, CPC. The NOAA Corps officer will inform the Director, CPC, rating officer and the reporting officer that this right is being exercised. The NOAA Corps officer will provide copies of the rebuttal to the rating and reporting officers within 5 days of

Part 4 - Fitness Reports

submission to the Director, CPC. The Director, CPC, will forward the Fitness Report and the rebuttal to OPB for review and further action, if warranted. A copy of the rebuttal will be placed in the officer's Official Personnel File.

- D. Any supervisor preparing a Fitness Report containing an unfit-for-retention recommendation shall retain that report for 10 days after discussing it with the rated officer. During this period, the rated officer may present any statement he/she chooses to make on his/her behalf for submission to the Director, CPC, with the Fitness Report. Alternatively, the rated officer may forward the statement directly to the Director, CPC.

04404 FITNESS REPORT ROUTING

- A. The original Fitness Report shall be submitted by the rating officer directly to the Director, CPC. Copies may be retained by those signing in block 15.

Part 4 - Fitness Reports

[blank fitness report form omitted]

PART 5 - Refresher Training

| | Section |
|--|----------------|
| Policy | 04501 |
| Training Requirements: 12 Months or Less Ashore | 04502 |
| Training Requirements: 24 Months or Less Ashore | 04503 |
| Training Requirements: Greater than 24 Months Ashore | 04504 |
| Exceptions | 04505 |

Part 5 - Refresher Training**04501 POLICY**

- A. This directive prescribes training standards for all NOAA Corps Officers assigned to permanent and temporary sea billets. Successful performance in shipboard assignments is critical to advancing through the chain of command. Successful performance in the command hierarchy is important for ensuring competitiveness in the promotion environment. The need for quality maritime and flight training for all seagoing and aviation officers, particularly those returning to sea and flight duty following extended periods, is well recognized.
- B. NOAA Corps officers designated for assignment to a permanent or temporary (augmenting) sea duty billet will be screened for Refresher Training (REFTRA) or alternative training prior to being assigned to a vessel. The content of the formal REFTRA program and standards for successful completion will be established and maintained by the Director, CPC, with approval by the Director. NOAA Corps officers designated for assignment to a permanent or temporary flight duty billet will prescribe to the Aircraft Operations Center Operations Manual for re-certification for flight duty.
- C. The level of requisite training will be based on the officer's recent sea experience and applicable training. NOAA Corps officers failing to complete the required training will be reviewed for retention in the NOAA Corps by the Officer Personnel Board..

04502 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS: 12 MONTHS OR LESS ASHORE

- A. Attendance at a formal REFTRA program will not be required for permanent and temporary sea assignments provided the NOAA Corps officer has sailed aboard a NOAA vessel as an underway Officer of the Deck (OOD) for a minimum of 20 days within the past 12 months and has satisfied all of the following requirements:
 - (1) successful completion of a USCG-approved unlimited radar observer's course within the previous 5 years;
 - (2) successful completion of an Automated Radar Plotting Aids (ARPA) certification course within the previous 5 years; and
 - (3) successful completion of a USCG-approved advanced firefighting course within the previous 5 years.

Part 5 - Refresher Training

- B. Radar, ARPA, and firefighting certifications may be obtained or renewed at any commercial facility offering the appropriate courses. Each NOAA Corps officer will ensure that training documentation is forwarded to CPC upon completion of the course work.

04503 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS: 24 MONTHS OR LESS ASHORE

- A. Attendance at a formal REFTRA program will not be required for permanent and temporary sea assignments provided the NOAA Corps officer has sailed aboard a NOAA vessel as an underway OOD for a minimum of 30 days within the past 24 months and has satisfied all of the following requirements:
- (1) successful completion of a USCG-approved unlimited radar observer's course within the previous 5 years;
 - (2) successful completion of an ARPA certification course within the previous 5 years;
 - (3) successful completion of a United States Coast Guard (USCG) approved advanced firefighting course within the previous 5 years; and
 - (4) successful completion of a USCG navigation rules examination prepared and graded by the REFTRA contractor and administered by a Marine Center or other designated party.

04504 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS: GREATER THAN 24 MONTHS ASHORE

- A. Attendance at a formal REFTRA will be required for permanent and temporary sea assignments for any NOAA Corps officer who has not sailed aboard a NOAA vessel as an underway OOD for a minimum of 30 days within the past 24 months.
- B. If more than 12 months have elapsed between the completion of a formal REFTRA and the assignment to a vessel, the NOAA Corps officer may be required to repeat all or part of the REFTRA.

Part 5 - Refresher Training

04505 EXCEPTIONS

- A. The Director, Marine and Aviation Operations Centers, may waive or demand a more stringent implementation of all or part of the recency of experience and training requirements outlined in this part.